

“Transcend the Ordinary”

Av 5784 - Heshvan 5785
September - November 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE CANTOR

By CANTOR SHARON BERNSTEIN



When someone does something praiseworthy in Jewish life, we often say “yasher koach” – may your strength continue. The idea is that whatever they have done took some strength to do, and we wish the person continuing strength so that they can do more.

Going into this Fall, I have been thinking that we could all use some of that kind of strength: Strength to navigate an increasingly uncertain world; strength to discover and be true to ourselves; strength to be understanding with and open to others who might see things very differently than we do; strength to help us push forward and strength to take a break when needed.

Strength comes in a myriad of forms. Some examples from our ancestors include: Abraham, who found strength to question God; Rebecca, who found strength to envision and enact a different future; Joseph, who found strength to forgive; Moses, who, feeling himself lacking in speech, found strength to stand up to Pharaoh and speak for the whole people; Yael, who found strength to strike with a hammer; and Hannah, who found strength to persist in asking for her heart’s desire.

These were not their only strengths – these were just the particular ones that arose according to the needs of the moment. I believe that, as they each found different kinds of strengths, so can we each discover and utilize different kinds of strengths within ourselves.

Strength can be quiet or loud, soft or tough, durable or fragile. It can lead us to new paths, or help us revisit those well-trodden. It can arise in the most mundane tasks as well as the herculean. It can be surprising or unexpected, appearing suddenly or morphing over time. And it can be shared, reinforced, lent and borrowed as needed.

So, as we recite our wishes and apologies and hopes and dreams coming into the new year, know that you have strength. Your own, particular, beautiful, very special strength. And the strength of all those around you and everyone who came before you.

May all our strengths continue.

Shana Tovah!

**HIGH HOLY
DAYS INFO**

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THIS ISSUE: Oneg Committee / Postcard Writing / President’s Message & more

Editor's Note: *With this issue, we welcome Sha'ar Zahav's new President of the Va'ad, Mike Shriver!*

By MIKE SHRIVER



It is truly an honor to be President of the Va'ad at Sha'ar Zahav.

I've been coming to SZ for over ten years, during which I have served as a Va'ad member and Vice-President and assisted our development and

fundraising efforts alongside our outstanding Resource Development Committee. I bring to the Va'ad 34 years of non-profit Board experience. Before I retired, I served as the Special Advisor to the Mayor of San Francisco on AIDS and HIV Policy and as Health Commissioner for the City and County of San Francisco, and was co-director of the AIDS Policy Research Center at the UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies.

For the next two years as SZ President, I plan to continue our conversations and processes around access and accessibility, around Israel and Palestine, and around security. I will support and expand the strong financial management of the shul, and with your help, we will wrestle down our structural deficit and increase financial support from our members. I look forward to working with our dynamic staff and strengthening and growing this brilliant, vibrant community. Please feel free to reach out to me at President@shaarzahav.org with questions, concerns - or even compliments - or just to share some good news in your life!

Sha'ar Zahav is an incredibly important part of my life. Giving back to this community is the very least I can do to express my gratitude.

Sha'ar Zahav

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By DANNY SHAPIRO



When I was a Hillel professional, one of my favorite times of the year was the installation of a new student board, bringing new energy, perspectives, ideas, and talents. Here at Sha'ar Zahav it's also an exciting

time! I am so grateful to the previous Va'ad, which I will always remember as the board that introduced me to SZ, and I am sad to see it go. At the same time I am looking forward to being part of whatever comes next. I found the passing of the Torah during the installation ceremony to be incredibly moving. It was timed perfectly after my 6 month anniversary at SZ, and it reaffirmed my excitement and commitment to this amazing community. Thank you to all past and new Va'ad leaders, and to everyone who supports the needs of our holy community.

There is no slow season at Sha'ar Zahav. On campus, summer was the time for planning, and other congregations usually have a summer lull, especially in June. Lucky for us, we have Pride month right between Passover and High Holy Days! Our Pride festivities were amazing, and being in San Francisco, and specifically at Sha'ar Zahav, was so special. I wish every LGBTQIA+ Jew (and non-Jew too) can celebrate Pride with us at some point. Most recently, we've had the Membership drive. Most of the congregation has already renewed their membership - if you haven't, please email or call me today to help ensure that we meet our budget goal.

The last big part of SZ that I have yet to witness are the High Holy Days. A huge shoutout to our lay leadership and clergy for this enormous undertaking. I'm looking forward to celebrating with everyone in a few weeks. Don't forget to register on our website, shaarzahav.org, and invite all your friends to join us online or at the Herbst Theatre.

Va'ad Members

Barbara Cymrot, Brad Friedman, Quinn Martinez, Josh Muller, Tirtza Pearl, Heidy Zohar Ramirez, Shelli Rawlings-Fein, Ruth Schoenbach, Brandie Solovay

Membership

Danny Shapiro
danny@shaarzahav.org

Hineni Caring Community

If you need help or can volunteer to help other Sha'ar Zahav members in need:
webmarla@me.com

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BEYOND APPLES AND HONEY, OR "CHILDREN ARE PEOPLE"

By RABBI Q



Janusz Korczak, a Polish Jewish pediatrician and children's rights activist, wrote, "Children are not the people of tomorrow, but people today. They are entitled to be taken seriously. They have a right

to be treated by adults with tenderness and respect, as equals..." Treating children with tenderness and respect is, luckily, now the norm in most educational settings. All too often, though, we educators think of children as delightful, if generic, vessels, for us to fill with information that will be important to the people that they will someday be.

Sometimes, this produces activities that may be interesting or fun, but don't lead

anywhere: "On Rosh Hashanah, we eat apples and honey. How many apples can you find in this picture?"

Here at Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer, I've noticed the deep, authentic respect that our faculty has for children. Whether in Ila's storytelling, Marty's discussions, or Andréa's hands-on creating, our students are, first and foremost, treated like people. We assume that, like us, they have spiritual needs, substantive ideas, and perceptive questions, even if they have less life experience than we do. During these High Holy Days, our students will explore the same big questions that we do: How do we prepare ourselves? What does it mean to start fresh? How can I become a better version of myself?

And then, of course, we eat apples and honey.

SHA'AR ZAHAV MEET THE B'MITZVAH

Riley Hannah Luftman

Riley Hannah Luftman, daughter of Reva and Adam Luftman, will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah on November 9. Riley lives in the Castro with her parents and younger sister Nora. She is a 7th grader at Hoover Middle School and attends Beit Sefer at Sha'ar Zahav. She loves playing flute, gymnastics, tennis, reading, singing, dogs, learning new languages, cooking, and being with her friends and family. Riley has a positive and outgoing personality and will quickly bring a smile to your face with her sense of humor.

Riley would like to thank Laura Trupin, Ann Daniels, and Miriam Menzel for all of their support and dedication in getting her ready for her bat mitzvah.

STILL TIME TO SAVE DEMOCRACY

By GERI KAHN

SZ's John Lewis Memorial Voter Engagement Group works with Reclaim Our Vote to send thousands of postcards to rural voters of color in crucial states throughout the election season. Will you join us as we push toward election day? Your cards will give voters crucial information on registration, how to find out about candidates, and ways to spread the word about the importance of voting - plus Get Out the Vote messages. We'll provide everything you need as you join the fight to save democracy!

Contact Geri Kahn (gekahn@gmail.com) or Tirtza Pearl (tirtza.pearl@gmail.com).

Read the JGF Online!

The JGF can be found online.

Read current and previous issues at:

<https://www.shaarzahav.org/newsletter>

FOOD FOR THE BODY AND SOUL

By MARTIN TANNENBAUM

What could be better than attending a transportive Kabbalat Shabbat service ... listening to a heartfelt drash, singing in community, making space for Shabbat? The answer: attending services and then having delicious food to nourish our bodies as well as our souls.

For those who can attend in person, we now benefit from dishes created by volunteer members. Think mock chopped liver (a concoction of lentils, caramelized onions and walnuts) which, absent the label, you'd swear was your Bubbe's chopped liver...or Kathleen Friedlander's deviled eggs, or Eli Schlenker's fruit tart, Tom Medin's savory tarts, Ann Bauman and Kelly Thiemann's chocolate feasts, Steve Shotland's cakes, Ellie Rose Maas' brownies or Alex Ingersoll's date pinwheels — which he first baked 70 years ago on the farm! Cheese platters, crudité, kugels and dips also make regular appearances.

Over the last two months, we have created an Oneg Chavurah to plan enticing menus and share shopping, recipes, baking and cooking responsibilities. If this appeals to you, please join us at oneg@shaarzahav.org. All skill levels are welcome. And if you'd like recipes to create favorite oneg dishes in your home, so we can enjoy knowing that our whole community has a chance to enjoy the same tastes even if we are not in the same space, please write to us.

Did you know SZ has a food and kitchen policy that covers kashruth, environmental and health concerns?

Check it out:

<https://bit.ly/SZfoodpolicy>

We are grateful to all our donors! Your generosity supports everything that Sha'ar Zahav does.

This issue lists donations, sponsorships, and all other announcements through July 25. Later information will be in the next issue.

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Justin and Brandie Berenstein
in memory of Allan Berenstein

Gregg Biggs

Diana Buchbinder and Jeane Redsecker
in honor of SZ leadership

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in honor of the birth of Tiela Chalmers'
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in honor of the birth of August Levi
Sun

in memory of Brian Weiss

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in memory of Harvey Chertok,
cherished father of Michael Chertok

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in memory of Marika Chill

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in loving memory of Irv Taub

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in honor of Ron Edelman's 80th
birthday

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in memory of his parents and brother,
Earl Greenspan, Evelyn Greenspan and
Jerry Greenspan

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in memory of an amazing father, Lenny
Plotch

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in memory of his father's yahrzeit

Michael Shriver and Susan Wolfson

Cantor's Discretionary Fund

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in honor of Cantor Bernstein's fabulous
teaching for the Chevra Kadisha

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in celebration of Jonathan Funk and
John Arnold's 40th anniversary

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in honor of his fellow Racial Equity
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on behalf of the estate of Shoshana
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in celebration of Naomi Rosenmoss
graduating from Vanderbilt Law School

Elena Shore

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The Welcome Home Project

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in celebration of Dr. Sophie Rosenmoss
being selected as a Chief Resident in
Internal Medicine at UCLA Med Center

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JULY

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in memory of her mother and father,
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Deborah Levy
in honor of Mike Shriver's presidency

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in memory of her father, Marty Cymrot

*(continued from page 7)***AUGUST***Flowers Sponsors:***James Carlson**

in memory of his mother, Jan Tuzzolino

*Oneg Sponsors:***Ernest and Kathleen Friedlander**in memory of Frances Friedlander, z"l
and in celebration of Cecil Arnold, z"l

in memory of Ann Arnold, z"l

Jonathan Funk and John Arnold

in celebration of their 40th anniversary

Geri Kahn

in memory of her mother, Sandra Kahn

Got something to celebrate? Send your
Mazel Tov Announcements to [office@
shaarzahav.org](mailto:office@shaarzahav.org) to be included in future
newsletters.

JUNE**Tiela Chalmers**and family, on the the birth of Tiela's
grandson August Levi Sun, son of Kailin
and her husband Andy**Daniel Loftus**

on his graduation

JULY**Michelle Lerman and Sam McCandlish**
on the birth of their new baby**AUGUST****Sarita Groisser**

on her retirement

Cheryl Magid and Janelle Magida fond farewell as they begin a new
chapter of their lives in Washington**SEPTEMBER****Jeffrey Lewis Cohen****Penny Dachinger****Lee Gierson****John Golebowski****Kevin Johnson****Elliot Klein****Bernard Pechter****Mike Rankin****Edith Schwartz****Diane Swanson****Edward Wolberg****Phillip Yanofsky****OCTOBER****Harry Clint Bigglestone****Annye Bone****Maely Daniele Dufty****Osna Elsa Frischman****Alice Katz****Rabbi Benjamin Marcus****Henry Mautner****Jeffrey A. Miller****Glenn Murray Miller****Michael Mohr****David Pierce****Victor Villaluna****Andrew Zysman****NOVEMBER****Donald Albert****Bruce Apter****Forrest Kincade****Harvey Levine****Elaine Lewis**

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SHA'AR ZAHAV CONDOLENCES

In Memoriam

The congregation notes with sorrow the deaths of:

MAY

Debby Lee Cohen
sister of Ellie Cohen

Bruce Elliot Shotland
brother of Elliot Shotland

JUNE

Irv Taub
uncle of Michael Tyler and Amy
Schustack

George Paul Roniger
father of Lori Roniger

JUNE

Richard Riffer
friend of Sha'ar Zahav

Ed McCanless
friend of Tony Harris

SHA'AR ZAHAV CONDOLENCES

Avraham Bardugo
friend of Smadar Lavie

Shoshi (Shoshana) Zeid
friend of Smadar Lavie

SHA'AR ZAHAV PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!

JULY

Mirac Fittro (he/him)

Ellie Rose Maas (she/her) and Jim
Chowdry (he/him)

Jacob Coblentz (he/him) and Kirsten
Walters (she/her)

David Sanchez (he/him)

Thank you for your donations!

Your contributions help us realize our commitment to building and maintaining a vibrant, living community for Sha'ar Zahav. A donation can be a meaningful way to honor friends or family, engagements, anniversaries, graduations, for special thanks, or to memorialize a loved one. Collectively, with your financial support, we continue to prosper, grow, and celebrate our future.

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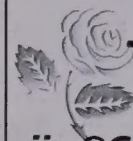
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We Want Your Photographs!

Do you have digital photographs or video of Sha'ar Zahav activities or events? The Archives Project would like to add copies to our growing photography and video library as we document the history of Sha'ar Zahav.

Please contact Lawrence Helman (heytheresells@gmail.com) or Robert Tat (rob@roberttat.com) for more information.

If you would like to join the team working on organizing our archival document materials, please contact Ron Lezell at Lezell.ron@gmail.com

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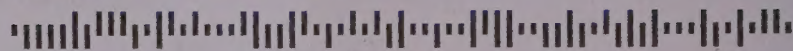
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